Mailed Man

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Mailed Man

by TigerPrawn

Summary

Nigel needs a way out of his criminal life in Romania and Adam wants to skip the mess of dating. A perfect match?

Chapter 1

Nigel wanted out.

He'd wanted out for a long time. And it wasn't because he was chicken shit. He'd do what he needed to do if it came to it. He wasn't scared of killing someone if he had to, he just didn't want to end up in jail over someone that wasn't worth the fucking bullet. There was a lot about this life, he realised, that wasn't worth a fucking damn.

And so the last straw was Gabi.

Sweet kid, and if he was even remotely straight he'd have bedded her. There was ample pressure around him from Darko, his dad and uncles, to find a nice girl to settle down with. He was nearly forty and people would start to think he was a fag, as Darko so eloquently put it.

Truth was, he'd fucking love to settle down. Just not with a woman, and not someone he loved enough that he'd want to drag them into this life.

As he hit his thirty-eighth birthday, to say he wanted out had become an understatement.

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To say that moving to California had completely changed Adam's life was an understatement.

Adam knew that his dad had always meant the best for him, but striking out completely alone, leaving behind Beth and Harlan and everything he had ever known, he was starting to see things differently. He was a lot more capable than his dad had given him credit for. Adam knew that his father had simply wanted to protect him, but he had also been coddled and sheltered in a way that had been counterproductive. Removed from that old life, he could see that clearly now.

Now that he had a job that he had found and got on his own merits. He had a small and comfortable house that he was able to afford from the rent he charged on his New York apartment. Harlan had helped him with that, Adam allowed, and still kept an eye on the place and the tenants for him. His wages were good too, allowing him to afford the small comforts that often made his life easier.

The only thing that could have made it better, he sometimes considered, was if Beth had decided to come with him.

But as the weeks turned to months and he settled into his new life, Adam realised that actually wasn't true. He didn't miss Beth, he missed the company. He missed sharing things with someone. With his dad gone, Harlan so far away and Beth now out of the picture, Adam found it a little lonely in California. This despite the fact that he had made several friends at work and enjoyed their company greatly, it just wasn't the same thing. He'd liked getting to know someone in that more personal way, and he missed sex.

He'd considered a couple of times, trying online dating. But two things held him back. Firstly, that he wasn't sure he specifically wanted a romantic relationship and secondly that he wasn't sure he wanted it with a woman. Adam had enjoyed having sex with Beth, and he had for many years before that enjoyed watching porn featuring straight couples, and he did have one DVD of a lesbian couple.

The porn had, to a degree, always felt perfunctory. And whilst he had enjoyed sex with Beth, there was something about it that had left him with an odd feeling. Not in a bad way, just that having sex with her had opened up his mind to himself as a sexual being in a different way than porn had.

Adam had felt compelled, even whilst they were together, to try and work it out. He had searched online and found other people who described feeling the same way he was feeling. And this led to more searches and more information and in the end, Adam came out the other side of it knowing two things for certain: that he was demi-sexual and that he didn't just like women.

Memories of those searches and discoveries were playing on Adam's mind as he headed to bed. He had talked with Harlan on the phone that evening and Harlan had of course asked if he had been dating at all. He knew Harlan meant well, and that in part he saw it from his own point of view and just assumed that Adam would just like to get back on the horse, as Harlan said.

But Adam didn't want to do that. He didn't want to just date someone for the sake of it and certainly not to be a replacement for Beth or for a lack of company in general.

He had said as much to Harlan who had then chuckled and seemed to interpret Adam's words differently, because then he suggested what Adam really needed was a mail order bride where he could just skip all the mess of dating and go right to the honeymoon.

Adam had interjected that this wasn't at all what he had meant, but Harlan had just laughed again and that made it clear he had been joking with Adam. Adam had smiled, and they had said good night, but as he made his way to bed he wondered what it might be like to do something like that.

Especially when it came to men. A thought he tried to ignore.

He wasn't ashamed of being bisexual, or of telling people that. After all, it was who he was. But he wasn't blind to how gay and bisexual men were treated, and that wasn't something he was sure he was prepared for. It was hard enough sometimes without adding another level of discrimination.

Adam was very keen to try out what it was like to be in a relationship with a man, and to like a man enough to find them arousing and have sex with them. But dating was hard, and he wasn't sure he especially liked that bit. Though he did wonder how much of that was just based on his experience with Beth. It had been difficult, hard to navigate and time consuming. He wasn't sure he wanted to do that bit again and had even less idea how to go about dating men than he did women.

It didn't matter, he was too busy with his new job anyway to consider it.

At least that was a convenient excuse to ignore his desire to explore his attraction to men. If he ever did look at a mail order bride as Harlan had suggested, it really would be a bride and definitely not a husband. There were just too many variables, too much baggage. He was too scared.

Sleepily, Adam sighed as he lay his head on his pillow, maybe it wasn't such a crazy idea thought, skip the difficult part altogether and come home every night to his mail order bride.

*

Nigel knew there weren't exactly a lot of options when it came to leaving the gangster life he'd fallen into. Pretty much death was the only way out, one way or the other. Unless he could run and hide.

Pointless doing that in Romania. They'd find him. You didn't run out on these people, especially when you knew as much as he did. Hell, they'd probably find him anywhere in Europe.

The US though? Maybe he could hide there and disappear completely.

Nigel was careful as he looked up potential options, getting burner phone after burner phone so he could research this shit. And when it came down to it there was only really one sure fire way of changing his identity and moving to the US in a way that would be almost impossible to trace, and that was as a mail order bride. Or groom as the case might be.

He'd heard that others had done this. Get a new identity, a green card, disappear.

He was sure there would be some lonely housewife in buttfuck Oklakansas or some place that was looking for someone just like him. A ready made husband. Rough and ready!

And he'd make it work, for a year or two maybe. He'd do what he had to do before running out on the dame and truly starting his life over.

All he had to do was-

His seventh burner in a month in hand, Nigel pressed 'call' on the number he'd finally tracked down. The guy who could get this arranged for him. In a month or so, he'd have a new name, a new passport and a clean record and be on his way to the US to marry the wife that he'd have plenty of, perfectly fabricated, evidence of having been seeing long distance for years.

Nigel held the phone to his ear as it began to ring, muttering to himself as he waited for the pick up, "Green Card here I come."

*

Six Weeks Later

Adam fidgeted as he waited for the doorbell to ring.

He had expected to go to the airport but the person he had been emailing regarding the mail order bride said that it was all part of the service to deliver his new spouse to the door. She was coming from Eastern Europe and would have been escorted the whole way.

Adam couldn't help imagine that she was going to turn up in a life size barbie doll box, carted up the few steps to his porch. Despite knowing that would not be the case, he was still glad to have moved from his New York apartment building to this small Californian house set back from the road and behind the treeline. He definitely didn't want to attract undue attention or questions.

As far as he could tell, this was all above board. He was technically not paying for the bride but for the matching service. It wasn't like she was going to be his slave or something. She was just someone looking for a better life in America and if he could provide that then he'd be happy.

Even so, he still had so many of his own questions. Like, what on earth had he been thinking?

He hadn't even seen pictures of her, only her profile information. The service had told him that they had scored as a high match and that had been good enough for him. He hadn't wanted to be influenced by her looks, he wanted this to just be based on personality and interests. Being demi-sexual, he knew that if they were to develop a physical relationship it would only be once he felt that emotional connection that he needed, and so appearance surely didn't matter?

This had all seemed a logical solution and was relatively inexpensive, especially compared to what a person might spend on dating and courtship. But the reality was now that he had a woman being delivered to his door to be his wife. The details of the local officiant were stuck to his fridge door.

The doorbell rang and Adam startled, stifling a cry. He wrung his hands as he got to his feet and then paced for a moment before forcing himself to go to the door.

He could see the shadows through the curtained side-window. Three figures, all tall and broad. Maybe it wasn't his bride after all? In which case he should probably try to get rid of these callers quickly.

Adam opened the door, looking between all three of the men that stood there, waiting for one of them to speak.

"Mr Raki? Can you sign here?" The man on the right spoke and then thrust a clipboard to him with paperwork attached. The headed paper was indeed the company he had been expecting, and scanning down everything looked as he had assumed it would. Except the name of the bride.

Nigel.

Nigel?

Adam looked up then at the two other men. One wore an identical polo shirt to the man who had given him the papers, the one in the middle was casually dressed with a tattoo on his neck and messy hair that he then smoothed back with both hands as Adam watched.

"I… Um… It said Nigela on my paperwork." Adam spoke the words to the three of them.

The two men in identical shirts turned to each other and began to talk quickly and aggressively in a language that Adam didn't understand. Soon they were joined by the third man who seemed very angry about the whole situation.

Eyes wide, Adam considered taking a step back inside the house and closing the door, but then the three men were looking at him again, all very annoyed.

"It's a fucking typo." The man on the left said as the man on the right pointed at the clipboard. "I told them to fix that."

"You need to take him and sign. Then you can email to sort this out. We cannot take him with us."

"I… You can't leave him. What do I do with him?" Adam asked, stunned. There was a strange fluttering in his chest that wasn't quite nervousness. He looked at the man, undeniably handsome and wondered how this could have happened. He had wanted a woman. Hadn't he?

Both men shrugged and then the third, Nigel, took the clipboard from Adam's hands with a huff. He looked over it before getting down to the bottom of it and reading out loud in a harsh accent, "Adam Raki."

He took a pen from the top pocket of the man on the left and then scrawled down the bottom of the page - Adam Raki - and threw the clipboard and pen back at them.

„Done,'' Nigel huffed and then strode past Adam into the house.

Adam was wide-eyed as the men shrugged and walked away, he looked behind him to see Nigel now walking around his home.

"Wait!" Adam called out but the men were already getting back in their vehicle, "wait!" he called again, this time to the man behind him. "Please…" Adam felt a wave of anguish as the van pulled away and the man dropped his backpack onto the sofa and then made himself comfortable next to it.

Adam took a breath, calling on some of the techniques he'd been working on to keep himself calm. Something he very much needed that moment.

He closed the door and stood there for a moment before turning to the sofa and finding Nigel was looking over his shoulder and watching him.

"I think there's been a mix up." Adam said as calmly as he could manage, wondering if he should call the police considering there was now a strange man in his house.

„Guess I'm not what you were expecting. Not a lot to be done about it now, is there *gorgeous."*

Adam didn't understand anything other than the last word, which the man - Nigel - had said in English, bringing a slight flush to Adam's cheeks. Was he calling Adam gorgeous? That didn't really seem appropriate at this juncture.

And despite that it caused a flutter in Adam's belly. He hadn't realised how much he had wanted to hear words like that from a man.

"I need to call someone about this, you can't stay here. I mean… you'll have to for tonight, but tomorrow this will all be resolved and you can go."

The man looked at Adam blankly.

“There is a room, upstairs.” Adam pointed at the ceiling, indicating the upper floor. “You can sleep upstairs.”

After another blank stare, Adam started off towards the stairs and then gestured for the man to follow him.

Nigel got to his feet with a salacious grin on his face and slung his bag back over his shoulder before swaggering towards Adam.

Adam wasn’t always great at reading people, discerning their feelings from their expressions, but Nigel’s gaze made him a little uncomfortable, and maybe also a little anxious in an unusual and not wholly unpleasant way.

Nigel followed as Adam led him up the stairs and Adam felt a little self conscious as he opened the door to the spare room and indicated that Nigel should go inside. He had furnished it thinking he would have a bride, and although it was mostly neutral there was definitely a feminine edge to some of the detailing on the dresser and side table.

“You can sleep in here,” Adam offered. “Just for tonight.”

„You had this all set up, huh? I guess you weren’t just after a fuck then,” Nigel laughed.

Adam frowned, wishing he understood any of what the man had said.

Like it or not they were now both in a rather unexpected and complicated situation and not being able to understand each other was not going to make getting it resolved any easier.

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Nigel gets a few insights whilst snooping around Adam's house.

Nigel woke up after the best night's sleep of his life.

It wasn't just the comfortable bed and the light breeze through the window, but the weight off of his shoulders being in this quaint little home with a new life ahead of him.

Even so, he wasn't sure how comfortable he should be getting. When Adam Raki had opened the door, Nigel thought his luck was in! He had been expecting a woman and yet here was this stunningly blue-eyed wonder who hands down was possibly the most beautiful man Nigel had ever seen. He'd nearly gotten fucking hard just waiting on the porch.

But then, it had turned out there was a mistake in the paperwork, and Adam wasn't actually expecting a husband.

Nigel couldn't help but feel the same little pang of regret at the thought of it as he had felt when standing there waiting to be invited in.

Fact was, there was nowhere else for him to go, so he had no other choice but to make himself at home. But in hindsight, maybe the brash manner that had been beaten into him over the years had not been the right approach here.

Even if Adam was looking for a wife, Nigel still needed a place to stay and he needed to not get deported. Right now the only option for him was to stay whether that was what Adam wanted or not.

Nigel looked at his phone, a new one he had been given when they had arrived in the US. The time was a little before seven and it didn't sound like there was any movement in the house.

He sat up and swung his legs over the bed, knowing this was his chance to dig his heels in.

No matter what happened, he had to stay.

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Adam woke to the smell of eggs, bacon and coffee.

He had barely slept a wink all night, thinking about the strange man now down the hall from his room and wishing he had a lock on his door. He really hadn't thought any of this through enough!

Finally he must have fallen asleep close to five and now he was awake again, tired but hungry thanks to the smells drifting up from downstairs.

Adam sat bolt upright in bed, realising that Nigel must be downstairs cooking himself breakfast. A usual thing for someone to do of course, in fact the expectation of having someone there for breakfast was why Adam had bought the eggs and bacon. It was simply jarring to suddenly be sharing his space again. And Adam wondered if it would have been even if Nigel hadn't been a stranger, so unused to having people in his space since moving to California. Or was it the thought of Nigel himself that made Adam uneasy?

An odd sensation rumbled through his belly and up to his chest, and this definitely wasn't hunger. It was butterflies at the thought of the man downstairs.

When Adam had considered exploring his attraction to men, Nigel was far from the man he'd imagined doing so with. He was brash and looked like a criminal. Adam still wasn't convinced he shouldn't just call the police.

But something stopped him, a gut feeling, maybe sympathy. He already knew from the information about Nigela that she - he - was escaping a difficult situation for a fresh start in the US. If that was true then could he turn away someone in need?

And, despite not at all being what Adam thought he'd be interested in, the rough and ready way Nigel had about him was… intriguing.

Adam blushed as he felt the ache of his morning wood. Normally he would take care of it or ignore it, perfunctory either way. He of course understood that nocturnal penile tumescence was not a result of sexual arousal, but since realising he was demi-sexual he started to wonder what this felt like for other people. He wasn't repulsed by sex or the idea of it, there just wasn't an interest in it for him with people he didn't have a connection with.

So he was slightly surprised that the thought of Nigel being downstairs, seemed to stir him all the more. He wouldn't quite call it attraction, it was just simply as if his penis was as curious as he was about the man.

Perhaps rough and ready was his type and he hadn't realised?

Either way it didn't matter, he had no plans to act on it. He needed to sort out what was going on and get this resolved and Nigel back out of his life before things got even more complicated.

Of course, that would be a lot easier if they could even remotely understand each other.

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Nigel grinned when Adam appeared at the door to the kitchen-dinner.

„Good morning!" He welcomed brightly as he slid the bacon onto the plates, „perfect timing. I made breakfast."

"You made breakfast," Adam replied, to which Nigel simply smiled, hoping that it wasn't a question.

He picked up the plates of bacon, eggs and toast and set them down on the small table, indicating with a nod of his head for Adam to come sit down.

„You want some coffee?"

“Coffee?” Adam frowned as he took a seat, as though trying to confirm the word that Nigel had said.

„Coffee.”

“Coffee.”

They looked at each other blankly for a moment and Nigel moved over and held up the freshly brewed pot. „Coffee.”

“Yes, coffee.” Adam agreed with a nod and then shook his head, “no thanks.”

Nigel clenched his jaw. This was going to be like pulling teeth, he probably should have learned English before moving to the US. Everything had happened so fast. He’d loaded Duolingo onto his phone but had to ditch that one and then just hadn’t thought about it. He could say hello, goodbye, yes, no, thank you and fuck off. All the important things.

From the expression on Adam’s face, he might get a fuck off right now. At least he had made breakfast, that was sure to win some points.

He slid into the seat opposite Adam and picked up his fork, waiting for Adam to do the same. Instead the young man kept looking over to the kitchen cabinets, and he looked *stressed*.

“I usually just have cereal.” Adam said.

Nigel found himself squinting, as though that was going to help him understand the words that had just been said.

Adam’s brows knit together in a frown and he spoke slowly, hands twitching slightly. “This looks very good. But I prefer cereal for breakfast.”

Nigel shook his head, not catching a single bit of that at all.

When he let out a sigh, Adam winced and didn’t look okay. Not scared, but maybe concerned and anxious. This was definitely not a good start.

„No breakfast?” Nigel asked, making a gesture with his hands over his own plate, as though crossing it out. Following up in English with just, “no?”

“Um, cereal.” Adam tried again, a slight tremor in his words.

Nigel shook his head and shrugged, trying to convey that he absolutely did not fucking understand.

“Um. I prefer cereal. I bought that food for my wi- um, for you I guess.” Adam continued but this time got to his feet and Nigel watched as he cautiously went to a cupboard and took out a box of cereal.

“Cereal.” Adam said then pointed at himself. “I, um, have cereal for my breakfast.”

„You want cereal!” Nigel realised and nodded, smiling. He was glad when Adam smiled back, a look of relief in his expression as he took out a bowl and started to make himself cereal for breakfast.

Nigel looked back at the untouched plate of food and rolled his eyes, „Don't know why the fuck you have all this bacon if you just want to eat cereal."

*

Adam was not scheduled to work today.

Although he hadn't told anyone the reason, he had booked time off from work in anticipation of the arrival of his bride, but being alone in the house with Nigel was the last thing he wanted. He had no idea how to behave around the man.

Would he have been so awkward around any man, or was it just that strangely soft yet overbearing way Nigel seemed to fill a room with his presence? Adam had known people like that before and most of the time it had not been pleasant. But Nigel was more like his friend Harlan, he was a big presence but not an intimidating one. Nigel fell somewhere between the two and Adam wasn't sure how to feel about that other than to expect it to, potentially, either become unpleasant like previous colleagues, or reassuring like Harlan.

The whole thing was incredibly overwhelming, and he needed to send some emails and maybe make some calls to get this all straightened out. None of which he wanted to do at home with Nigel around, even if he wouldn't understand anything Adam said.

So Adam decided to go into work and do these things in the privacy of his office. Having to first take over ten minutes to try and explain to Nigel that he had been called into work. He didn't like lying about it, and could feel the heat creeping up his neck, but he could hardly tell him the real reason. That seemed so much worse.

In the end, he'd had to resolve to looking up google translate on his phone and then showing Nigel the words, given that he had no idea how to pronounce them.

To make things even more difficult, one of Adam's coworkers caught him on the way into the building, very surprised to see him. Yet another person Adam didn't want to have to try and explain anything to.

"I thought you had time off."

"Um, yeah." His palms started to sweat as he thought about the excuse he had already planned. "I um, need to do something on a computer and there is a problem at my house-"

"Oh damn, not you as well? I've had so many issues with my service provider lately."

Adam nodded and remained mostly quiet as his colleague continued to chat as they entered the lobby and until they went their separate ways.

When Adam got to his office and closed the door, he slumped against it in relief. A little haven. He had to think about what to do next, because however long it took to resolve this, Adam was completely on edge now and really didn't want to go back home today.

*

It would be a lie to say that Nigel didn't snoop around the house as soon as Adam left, and he didn't regret it one bit. This was his home, for now. And he needed to check this guy out and make

sure there were no skeletons in the closet.

After all, what sort of person actually ordered a bride online?

The thought instantly caused a pang. After all it had been his way out and so he should be grateful. He definitely shouldn't be judging. So he resolved not to. Not for that at least.

„Mm, what do we have here?" Nigel ran his finger over the DVD spines in Adam's bedroom cupboard with a grin. Mostly straight porn, but there at the end, the closest to a very neatly slotted in box, were definitely gay. In fact he was sure he'd watched the one with the lumberjack himself.

Unable to help himself, Nigel pulled the box from the shelf and pulled the top off of it, his face splitting into a wider grin at the contents.

Two different types of lube, some lotion and tissues. One buttplug for beginners and a slim, finger-like dildo.

Nigel let out a warm chuckle before putting the lid back on and placing it back on the shelf and then adjusting his crotch. Damn if he hadn't gotten a little hard thinking about that innocent and elfin looking kid fucking himself with that adorable dildo.

Okay, well between that and the very neat and tidy way everything was arranged, the straight laced clothes, and what seemed like a prim attitude, Nigel felt like he had a better understanding of his would-be husband. That said, for all Nigel knew, everything out of Adam's mouth could be cursing him out or calling his mother a whore.

That seemed doubtful.

Adam, as far as Nigel could tell, was kooky, liked things neat and tidy. Seemed to be a bit of a nerd if the books and robots and shit was anything to go by. He was super organised, and everything clearly had its place, including his buttplug apparently.

Fastidious. Nigel could live with that. He could be neat and tidy and fit in around Adam's life for as long as he needed to.

After looking over some of the basic and practical toiletries, Nigel made his way back downstairs. Much like the morning, he knew that part of the key to this would be to make himself useful. Maybe even indispensable. So Nigel went to the kitchen to fix himself a snack and look over what the options were for dinner.

„What the fuck?" Nigel stood in front of the cupboard he'd watched Adam go to earlier, looking at box after box of the cereal Adam had eaten that morning. Was he a fucking domesday prepper? Maybe he bought things wholesale so he didn't need to shop so often?

Nigel could appreciate that, he fucking hated shopping. And this did sort of gel with everything else he'd seen so far in Adam's house. Prepared and set in a routine.

Nigel could understand that. There had been times in his life he'd have craved having a routine and not feeling like he was living on a fucking rollercoaster that someone else was driving.

He slumped against the counter and let out a sigh, deep relief rolling over him. He was out of it and safe.

Nigel took a breath and continued snooping in the kitchen, it becoming readily apparent what he'd be making for dinner.

Macaroni cheese.

*

It was late by the time Adam got home.

He had worked late before when there had been reason to, and it was something he'd grown used to. But there had always been good reason then, and there had been a level of accomplishment and enjoyment that had eased him from his usual routine.

That had not been the case today. He'd found things to keep him busy, even made excuses to colleagues as to why he had to be there to finish this or that in order to stay as long as possible. Adam knew he couldn't do this every day, he couldn't keep avoiding the situation, but he'd let himself have this one day.

As it was he hadn't really gotten anywhere with emailing about the Nigela/Nigel mix-up. The first response, it was clear, they didn't understand what he was explaining. And then using google translate to Romanian on the second try, it seemed to make things worse. Finally they seemed to understand the problem but only responded that they would look into it and get back to him.

It was a little past eight when he got home and found a macaroni cheese dinner on the kitchen side and Nigel asleep on the sofa, jetlag clearly still an issue. Adam's eye was drawn to the green of a beautiful side salad. It wasn't something he'd usually put with his dinner, but he was trying to branch out and it was nice of Nigel to make food.

Adam ate quietly, not wanting to wake Nigel, even though he knew he should probably thank him. But he looked so peaceful sprawled out, like he took up space that was made for him.
Adam felt a flutter in his belly at the thought. Would it be terrible if Nigel stayed?

It would be nice not to be alone. He had grown used to it, but having someone in his space in this way took him back to those safe and warm times when his dad was still around.

Adam let out a soft sigh before grabbing the throw from the back of the sofa and draping it over Nigel.

He would see what tomorrow might bring.

Adam got into his bed, ready to settle in for the night when something caught his eye. Looking over at the cupboard he could see the door slightly ajar. With a frown, Adam got back out of bed and went over to slowly open the door.

Everything looked as it should, except one thing. His private box was slightly askew on the shelf.

Adam's breath caught at the realisation that Nigel had seen inside his box.

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Nigel starts to make himself at home.

For the second day in a row, Adam woke to the smell of bacon cooking and coffee brewing.

It gave him strangely mixed feelings. There was a dull comfort in the routine of it, but a slightly unsettling feeling at knowing that there was someone else in his home. Someone who didn't appear to be going anywhere soon, and had apparently snooped in his room.

Adam wondered if he might have done the same in Nigel's position, after all Adam was a stranger too and from Nigel's perspective he might wonder why someone would want a mail order spouse.

Either way, Adam resolved not to mention it, not least because he had no desire to discuss his masturbatory habits with a stranger. Instead he wondered if there was a way to spend the day at work again without anyone asking questions.

As he rose from the bed, he concluded that was unlikely, and so he would have to stay home with Nigel and continue to try and resolve this situation. If the company hadn't emailed back by lunchtime, he would email again. They couldn't just leave this man here with him, could they?

Once showered and dressed, Adam made his way down to the kitchen, mentally preparing himself for a repeat of the day before.

Instead he was surprised to find that a bowl, milk and cereal had been laid out on the table at his setting. Nigel was pouring two cups of coffee, his own cooked breakfast already placed opposite Adam's cereal.

„Coffee," Nigel announced as he set a mug down next to the cereal.

That was when Adam noticed that today Nigel was not in his jeans and t-shirt but instead in a tank top and boxers. Whilst Nigel had apparently made himself completely at home, Adam felt like he could use a few more layers between them, not least because of the little twitch in his eye at the sight of the man. The soft cotton left nothing to the imagination.

"Thanks," Adam replied hurriedly before taking his seat and pouring cereal so violently into his bowl that some scattered over the table. A few pieces landing on Nigel's plate.

His own coffee in hand, Nigel took his seat and raised an amused brow before plucking the cereal from his bacon and popping them into his mouth. He ate them with a crunch and then grinned at Adam.

Adam felt like a deer in the headlights, frozen with the cereal box in his hand. He swallowed and then lowered it, setting it back to one side before reaching for the milk.

„Careful! I don't want my bacon drenched," Nigel said with a chuckle.

Adam frowned, wishing he could have understood the words almost as much as he wished his hand wasn't shaking as he lifted the bottle.

„Are you okay?" Nigel asked, clearly a question from his expression. „Let me help."

Adam was too surprised to resist when Nigel carefully took the milk from his hand and poured it over the cereal, a glance at Adam every few moments as if waiting to be told when to stop.

As the milk rose, Adam held up his hand for Nigel to stop, and Nigel did. Setting the milk back down with a smile.

They both ate in silence for a few minutes before Nigel cleared his throat and said, "Good morning."

At the English words, albeit in a thick Romanian accent, Adam startled and let out a small cry as he jolted back in his seat.

Nigel's eyebrows shot up and he followed quickly with, „sorry, shit. Are you okay? I didn't mean to startle you."

"I thought you didn't speak English," Adam replied with a slight panic. Was this man some sort of trickster, a hustler?

„English?"

"English?"

Nigel shook his head and then picked up his phone from the side of the table, „Duolingo."

Nigel opened an app on his phone and showed it to Adam, a little owl face popped up with something written in, what Adam had to assume, was Romanian.

„Engleză," Nigel said with a smile. „I'll be fucking fluent before you know it!"

Adam smiled and nodded, unsure what Nigel had said but sensing it was something that needed to be encouraged.

*

If Nigel was honest, going to breakfast in his underwear had been as much about testing Adam as it had been about being comfortable.

After seeing inside Adam's box of treats, he couldn't get the idea out of his head of the cute little man pleasuring himself with the slim dildo. And now that he'd seen Adam Raki all wide-eyed and flustered, he had a perfect visual of the entire picture.

Damn, this whole thing would probably be easier if Nigel didn't start getting boners for his would-be husband. He'd told himself as much when he'd come hard against the tiles in the shower the evening before. But his dick was often a law unto itself.

And it had been a while.

In fact, it had been a long while since his last hook up. The last time had been months ago when he was able to get over to Timișoara under the guise of a *business* trip.

Maybe if this was going to end up being a long term thing then he should try and discuss a friends with benefits situation with Adam, or maybe Adam wouldn't mind Nigel going off to a gay bar? Either way, learning English was the only way to get anywhere with both of those options.

And Nigel had to admit that he enjoyed the way Adam had been startled at the two words he'd said in English at breakfast. Surely it is always a good thing to keep surprising your significant other?

Nigel drifted with the thought for a few minutes, thinking about Adam being impressed by his learning English, and rewarding him with time and affection.

Nigel shook his head sharply and snapped out of the reverie, mentally scalding himself. Despite his tough exterior, Nigel was a romantic and as much as he had always tried to stifle that side of himself in fear of where it might lead him, it was undeniable. It was so easy for him to fancy himself in love with someone, but he knew really he was just in love with the idea of being in love. Obsessive about it at times, it drove him insane.

He wanted someone he could lavish attention on and receive their affection in return. But there had never been an opportunity for him to have that previously.

And that wasn't something he could chance with Adam Raki even if he could already feel that fondness in his chest expanding.

*

It had been a relief for Adam when Nigel had gone up to his room to shower and dress.

Not just because it would probably be better for Nigel not to wander around in his underwear, but also because his company was so heavy. Nigel was incredibly intense in a way that Adam found difficult to process, though he found he didn't hate it.

His mind wandered for a moment to the front of Nigel's boxers, the outline there as the man's soft cock swung freely. He considered it in an academic way, how it would feel in his hand, the weight of it. But as Adam felt a slight tightness in his chest at the idea of being intimate with Nigel he swallowed and shook the thought from his head.

The last thing he needed was to become sexually attracted to the man. Neither of them needed that complication.

Adam pushed the thought from his mind and set his laptop on the table, checking his emails first of all.

There was nothing from the service and Adam expected that to bother him more than it did. Whilst he knew it would be difficult to adjust to having a new person in his home, he was also starting to find it pleasant. And perhaps that was because it was Nigel and not someone else? Adam couldn't be sure.

But he liked the way Nigel had set out breakfast for him, and he liked the way Nigel spoke to him, even if he couldn't understand a word of it. Adam was used to people being impatient with him, especially strangers. But despite the gruffness in the beginning, Nigel had not been like that at all.

Adam wasn't stupid, he knew that Nigel must have an ulterior motive. He knew Adam was going to try and send him away, to the woman he was no doubt intended for, but Nigel was clearly trying to make himself of use. Perhaps in an effort to either be less inconvenient until then or to stay?

Playing with his laptop until there was no possible excuse for him to still be on it, Adam quietly closed the lid and looked across into the living room. Nigel was now sitting at one end of the sofa reading something on his phone and frowning.

Adam wasn't sure if he was angry or if he was concentrating, he didn't know Nigel well enough to decipher the expression, but both were intriguing.

With the only other real option being to go up to his room, instead Adam stood and walked over to the sofa, waiting for Nigel to notice him. It might be his own house and his own sofa, but he didn't like to feel that he was intruding on anyone.

„Hello, gorgeous," Nigel looked up with a smile.

Once again the endearment was in English and it flustered Adam a little. Having a man say that to him felt like an affirmation of his attraction towards men and his suspicion that he could find them sexually arousing.

"What are you doing?" Adam asked, a little more blunt than he meant to, given Nigel's words.

When Nigel frowned at him Adam pointed at Nigel's phone.

"Are you talking to family and friends back home?"

„Family?" Nigel repeated the word with a slightly different pronunciation that Adam had to assume was Romanian but that they were talking about the same thing.

Looking back at his phone and perhaps realising what Adam had asked Nigel shook his head and his expression dropped. He looked sad.

Maybe he didn't have a family? That would explain why he might want to start over on the other side of the world.

Adam shuffled from foot to foot, unsure what to say or do. But when Nigel noticed the discomfort he pulled a smile back on and patted the sofa in invitation to sit.

„No family. Duolingo," Nigel turned the phone to Adam and he could see that it was again the language app that Nigel had shown him before.

"Oh," Adam nodded and smiled back, moving slowly to take the offered seat.

He sat at the other end of the sofa, as far from Nigel as he could get whilst still being on the same seat and then took his own phone out.

"Duolingo?" Adam asked.

Nigel nodded and smiled again, this time a rather pleased smile as he watched Adam look it up in the app store.

Adam had never really considered learning languages before. He had never really sought to travel anywhere. Perhaps it would be hard to understand? The idea frustrated him a little, but then he reasoned with himself that technically mathematics was a language and he was more than capable with that.

*

They didn't really talk much most of the day, despite both talking to their phones, responding to the various exercises in their attempt to learn each other's languages.

Adam had made them sandwiches for lunch and returned just as Nigel was trying to pronounce the English translation he was learning. He wasn't exactly sure which part of it had come out wrong, but it had pulled a small chuckle from Adam that had warmed him. There was no malice in it, if anything it was like they were joking together and the rest of the afternoon he found Adam correcting some of his pronunciations with the patience of an amused pet owner with a new puppy.

And well, Nigel found himself more and more willing to be Adam's puppy.

Adam, on the other hand, was a natural and picked up a lot of the simpler words and phrases quickly. He had soon passed Nigel on the count of lessons undertaken and points earned. A few months earlier this would have irked Nigel's competitive streak and he'd have been pissed. But as it was he was just looking forward to being able to converse with his would-be husband.

If only that were a damn thing. It might have only been a couple of days, but Nigel was getting fond of the idea of being here. With Adam.

As the day wore on, Nigel stood and took their plates to the kitchen, starting to prepare something for their dinner. The concerned glances from Adam gave him the suspicion that he should be making Adam the same as he had the night before. After all, this man was clearly set in his routine and there were fucking thousands of the boxes of the same meal over and over. There had to be a reason for that.

And yes, as he began to prepare the same meal as the night before, Adam visibly relaxed. He even grew a small smile as he continued to work on his Romanian.

Fuck, Nigel really did like that little smile. He liked even more that something he had done had put it there.

Adam wasn't anything like any of the rough and ready types he'd fucked around with in club bathrooms. He was like the boy next door, the sort of partner Nigel could introduce to his mother. If Adam were a woman. And the fact was, Nigel had to admit that this was his type. If he had to have a type, it definitely wasn't the sort of men he'd been with before, but he would have never considered anyone like Adam. Never had been in a position to. But now he was, he was really starting to feel like he didn't want to leave.

He wanted to be hopeful that Adam might be into men given his porn tastes. But then plenty of straight men watched lesbian porn. Attraction and arousal were strange things and sometimes didn't always make sense. But, fuck, he hoped that Adam's porn made sense.

Nigel cleared his throat.

„Adam?" He called over and Adam looked up at him for a moment before rising and coming over to the kitchen. Maybe it was best he just put it out there before Adam succeeded in sending him back to Romania or wherever the fuck he was going to end up if he didn't manage to dig his feet under the table here.

"Do you need help?" Adam asked, looking over what Nigel was doing, the lilt in his words made Nigel think that maybe Adam was offering help.

"Um, hello." Nigel said and then winced, all other English having evaporated from his mind. He lifted one finger to indicate that Adam should wait whilst he then cleaned his hands and grabbed his phone.

Adam waited, watching him curiously as Nigel navigated to a translation app and then entered the words in Romanian before showing the phone to Adam

:: You know I'm gay, yes? ::

Adam blinked and then looked from the phone to Nigel and then back to the phone.

And it dawned on Nigel then that perhaps the porn meant nothing at all, or there was some weird reason behind it and Adam was actually homophobic? It was so unlikely, he couldn't imagine it at all. But for fear of being kicked out with nowhere at all to go, he pulled the phone back and typed more.

:: Is that a problem? ::

When he showed the phone to Adam again, Adam's eyes were wide. After a few moments he blinked and said hurriedly, "No problem. No, it's perfectly fine. You're perfectly fine."

Flustered, Adam muttered something as he mimed washing his hands and then hurried off to the bathroom.

Nigel had no idea what Adam had said at all, but from the way his cheeks had gone pink and he had bitten at his lower lip as he fled, Nigel was sure Adam had no issue with the fact he was gay.

Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Adam needs Nigel's help and Nigel doesn't disappoint.

Adam didn’t sleep well, waking up exhausted and unsettled.

An awkwardness had hung over the house since Nigel divulged his sexuality.

And it shouldn’t, Adam knew, and scalded himself for it. It wasn’t any bigotry on his part of course, far from it. It was the possibilities that the confession opened up that unsettled Adam. It had been one thing to consider he might have an interest in men, and even to enjoy Nigel’s company. It was quite another to think that there could be something between them if they both wanted it.

He was scared, Adam had realised quickly.

He was scared of his own thoughts and feelings when it came to men generally and to Nigel in particular. And, he allowed, none of that was Nigel’s fault. And yet it was Nigel suffering his silence and awkwardness.

“Good morning,” Nigel said with a smile, pulling out Adam’s chair at the small dining table, breakfast already laid out for him.

“Yes,” Adam acknowledged with a frown, taking his seat and sitting stiffly. He felt the urge to stim for the first time in a while and perhaps Nigel realised something was amiss.

“Okay?” Nigel asked.

Adam nodded, despite his lips thinning and jaw tightening.

„Fuck, I’ve ruined everything,” Nigel muttered, looking down at his own plate of food with an expression Adam struggled to read.

Clearly whatever he had said was not good.

“I’m making things awkward,” Adam acknowledged.

Nigel looked up at him and frowned, not understanding.

“Um,” Adam began again, concentrating as he tried to remember some of the basics. „Sorry.” Adam attempted in Romanian.

Nigel’s face lit up at the word, as it had every time Adam had attempted to speak Romanian. The same way he thought his own probably did when Nigel attempted English. It was in those moments that something like electricity crackled between them. A spark, a connection, that Adam had read about in books and seen in films but never experienced for himself.

“Oh,” Adam took in a sharp breath and blushed as he felt himself getting hard.

“Okay?” Nigel asked again.

Adam nibbled at his lower lip for a moment before shaking his head.

“I don’t know.”

Nigel frowned, squinting slightly to demonstrate that he didn’t quite understand Adam’s reply.

“Um,” Adam started again and then shook his head, realising there was no way he knew enough Romanian to even remotely begin to explain this.

So instead he pulled his phone out of his pocket and began typing into the translation app, unsure whether all the words would translate exactly.

:: I think I might be attracted to men, sexually. I find men attractive, but I am demi-sexual and have had no opportunity to explore how deep that attraction goes ::

He pressed translate and then passed his phone to Nigel who continued to frown as he read the words. Adam winced, wondering whether the words had been completely garbled in translation. But then a smile spread across Nigel’s face. It was soft and gentle, as Nigel tapped in some words of his own before passing the phone back.

:: Would you like me to help test the theory? ::

Adam heard Nigel chuckle and looked up to see he was smiling at Adam’s heated cheeks.

Adam blinked, „maybe,” he said tentatively, hoping his accent was correct. „Not, um, now. Not now.”

Nigel nodded, his smile fond, „when you’re ready,” he responded. Though Adam didn’t really understand the words, he was sure he understood the sentiment.

*

Nigel found a strange sort of contentment in his new life.

He had been living with Adam a little over a month and they had fallen into a rhythm. Adam had gone back to work after his vacation time and Nigel kept house, in his own way. He prepared all the meals, finding a fondness for the relaxation he found in cooking. Sometimes he tidied the house a little, though Adam was impeccably tidy so very little effort was needed. He took up gardening the little plot around the house.

But he spent most of his time learning English. He was now better at English than Adam was with Romanian, simply because he had more time to spend learning it than Adam did now. Though Adam was still trying, and every night after dinner they would sit on the sofa together and both practice.

There was a domesticity in it that Nigel had never dreamt he would have with a man and he was starting to develop more reasons to fear being sent away. Not just the potential of going back to Romania or the uncertainty of not knowing where else he would go, but the thought of leaving Adam and this life they were building together.

Things had changed that day that Adam had admitted he might also like men. Which of course Nigel had already suspected from the man's taste in porn, but the confirmation had broken down a barrier between them. A new level of comfort emerged from the awkwardness.

And although they had never revisited Nigel's cheeky suggestion to help Adam explore his sexuality, they were growing closer all the same.

Nigel had had to look up what demi-sexual meant, but then understood exactly Adam's hesitance and confusion. He was never going to push for something between them, all he could do was continue how they were going, how close they were getting.

Many times they'd sat on the sofa watching a movie together, usually in English with Romanian subtitles, and drifted closer. So close that their thighs pressed together and Nigel was tempted to put his arm around Adam. Especially on those few occasions where Adam had had a long day at work and he began to nod off, slumping gently against Nigel's side.

It was getting harder for Nigel to deny the depth of his attraction. It had started as sexual attraction and a fondness for the man's blushes to something more consuming. Something that made the thought of being sent away completely heart wrenching.

"Nigel?"

He looked up from his meal preparations at the sound of Adam's voice as he came through the front door, and then looked at the wall clock. Adam wasn't usually home for another hour and he looked unsettled.

Nigel wiped his hands on the towel and moved quickly towards Adam, only slowing as he got closer and realised he wasn't sure what he should do.

He wanted to pull Adam into his arms and ask what was wrong, but instead he stopped a foot in front of him.

"Are you okay?" Nigel asked, knowing his English accent was suffering because of his concern.

Adam nodded but looked down at his feet.

Instinctively Nigel reached out and hooked a finger under Adam's chin, guiding his face back up though he wasn't surprised that Adam didn't meet his gaze. He didn't always, especially if he was emotional.

"What?" Nigel asked, concerned.

"Work, they are having a…" Adam concentrated as he tried to find the words, „office party."

Nigel nodded, "Okay. You don't like to party?"

Nigel was struck in that moment by how little they knew each other in some ways. They had spent all this time talking and laughing and yet never really leaving the house, their perfect little bubble. What did Adam like to do other than work and learn Romanian with his accidental mail order husband?

Adam shrugged, "I like my colleagues."

“What is problem?” Nigel winced, knowing he was missing words as he tried to keep the conversation going and find out what had upset his Adam. That thought made him draw a sharp breath which he tried to cover by clearing his throat.

His Adam.

“Partners are invited. And they all knew that my fiancé was coming to live with me.”

Nigel smiled and took Adam’s hands in his own, “I have to come?”

“I can’t ask you to--” Adam started but Nigel cut him off with a shake of his head.

„I’d be delighted to come with you. I want to.”

Adam’s frown didn’t ease even though Nigel was sure he would understand enough of the words.

“I don’t like lying.” Adam explained, „how do we explain this?”

Nigel understood then, the root of Adam’s concern.

„A half truth. We’ll tell them we met online.”

Adam seemed to catch enough of that to nod, his mouth turning up into a small smile finally.

„You’re all worked up,” Nigel acknowledged, leading Adam over to the sofa and then manoeuvring him so that he was sat on the floor in front of the sofa and between Nigel’s legs.

There was a frown but no protest, and then a startled gasp and a squeak of pleasure as Nigel began to gently massage Adam’s shoulders over his shirt.

Despite being completely focused on trying to relieve Adam’s tension, Nigel couldn’t help the reaction of his body as his heart raced and his cock hardened. He had never touched Adam before, not like this.

He felt Adam trembling under his fingers and tightened his jaw to hold back the suggestion that Adam should remove his shirt. Not wanting to scare him off.

“Want to look after you,” Nigel stumbled over the words that made Adam freeze and then pull away.

“I need to be alone,” Adam told him without turning, before scurrying to his feet and heading up to his room.

Nigel let out something between a sigh and a groan and sank back into the sofa.

This situation might end up killing him. But it would be one hell of a way to die.

*

Adam had stopped chasing the service for news on returning Nigel three weeks after Nigel had arrived. He knew he should keep pestering them about the situation and get it all rectified. But he had started to really like Nigel and selfishly he would miss him if he left.

It was hard to imagine the house without him. Or even life without him.

When Adam's father had died he hadn't know how he could ever fill that void, but over time he had learned to be alone. And he had found some freedom in it. As much as he had loved his dad, on reflection he had perhaps been too sheltering of Adam.

And now he had his own life and didn't need anyone else.

He didn't *need* Nigel.

He *wanted* Nigel.

Adam swallowed, his heart skipping a beat for a moment before he looked back to the mirror and straightened his tie.

It was smart casual so nothing too fancy, just a button down he'd wear for work and a nice tie. He had loaned one to Nigel as well, wondering which of the few shirts he'd brought with him the man would wear with the slim navy tie.

"Knock knock," Nigel said as he gently knocked and simultaneously opened Adam's bedroom door. Something that had been happening increasingly - them dropping by each other's rooms so casually.

„Beautiful," Nigel purred the word that Adam didn't understand.

His Romanian was getting pretty good, but there was still so much he didn't know. And he found himself wondering what Nigel had meant, given the intense look he was giving him.

Then Adam noticed what Nigel was wearing and his lips tweaked up into a smile.

It might seem ridiculous, but it seemed so Nigel. So very much, don't give a fuck.

"You like?" Nigel asked as he stepped into the room and gave a little spin.

He was wearing a light blue shirt with dachshunds on it in a variety of colours. The navy tie sat perfectly, as though he was simply wearing a normal button down.

The way the short sleeves hugged his biceps drew Adam's eye and his mouth went dry. He realised recently how much he was noticing things like this, Nigel's physical appearance. And more especially, how that made him feel.

Adam opened his mouth to say something, he wasn't even sure what, but then there was a knock at the front door. Their taxi had arrived.

It was a short ride to the Observatory, the event taking place in one of their function suites.

Nigel looked around as they left the taxi behind and made their way through.

"Amazing," he commented, making Adam feel somewhat guilty that he hadn't brought him here before. Wasn't that what a spouse would do?

It wasn't that he was ashamed of Nigel. He was just worried about the general reaction.

Adam had never said much about his fiancé, and people were too polite to pry. But he imagined they might all have assumed his fiancé to be a woman as had been intended, and he had not corrected that since Nigel's arrival.

And now it was too late and whatever reaction they might have was going to happen.

And yet, Adam felt soothed by the fact that Nigel would be there with him. If anyone was mean about it then he was sure that Nigel would have something to say.

Nigel would never let anything happen to him, he knew that deep down inside.

"Adam," his name was called by Carol, one of his co-workers as she waved them over to the bar that had been set up.

"Hi Carol," Adam started, "this is Nigel."

"A pleasure," Nigel crooned and held out his hand, kissing the back of Carol's as she offered hers whilst looking between the two of them, trying to work out the situation.

"Nigel?" She asked, clearly charmed.

"Um," Adam braced himself for the guilt as he replied, "my fiancé," but it didn't come. It didn't feel like a lie.

Nigel slipped his hand into Adam's then, holding it tight and smiling at Carol.

"Oh, oh okay," Carol seemed caught off guard and then shook her head in such a way that it reminded Adam of a computer resetting. "Nigel, the fiance. Wow, I'm so pleased to meet you!"

Adam liked Carol a lot and her smile was so wide and genuine that he couldn't help but smile and squeeze Nigel's hand.

"Brian," she signalled over to another co-worker that Adam worked closely with and often joined for after work drinks. "This is Nigel, Adam's fiance."

"Great to meet you," Brian enthused, holding out a hand to shake with no hesitation and not even a hint of surprise.

Something about that sent a thrill through Adam.

*

Nigel had never been to a corporate party before.

He'd been to plenty of other types of party, usually with drugs and people fucking in the bathroom. This was a lot more civilised and he had expected to feel out of place.

But everyone there seemed to be doing their absolute best to set him at ease and he realised immediately it was because they were all so fond of Adam. It was really him they wanted to set at ease.

The thought made Nigel feel a mixture of warmth and jealousy towards them all.

He grabbed Adam and himself another drink from the bar and watched from across the room as Adam relaxed into casual conversation with his colleagues.

He wanted to envy that ease they had, but the fact was, he couldn't. He already had that with Adam, more even. What he didn't have was that next step, that next level of closeness that he wasn't sure Adam ever wanted with him.

That conversation had been shut down and despite how much he wanted Adam, he wasn't going to broach it. The ball was in Adam's court, as they say.

"Got yourself a good one there."

Nigel turned at the voice and realised Carol was standing next to him, grinning and looking a little tipsy. As they all were.

"He's beautiful," Nigel said, trying to find some words in English and landing on those.

"Aww," Carol responded, clearly moved by the words. "You guys are so cute together. And it's so great how happy you make him."

Nigel frowned, not quite catching every word.

"Sorry, my English. I'm still learning." Nigel explained and she made another 'aww' face.

"So romantic. I was saying, you make him happy. Adam, he's very happy. Since you arrived."

That Nigel understood enough to feel it in his chest, the swell and the flutter.

"He's beautiful," Nigel repeated, stuck for words. Carol laughed and nodded.

"He's absolutely beautiful."

She left him then, heading back to some other co-workers and Nigel made his way back towards Adam.

He was deep in conversation with Brian and he wore a frown. Neither of them were paying any attention to Nigel as he moved towards them and he was about ready to lose his shit if Brian was upsetting Adam.

As he drew closer he could hear what Brian was saying.

"I'll admit, I was dubious. That neck tattoo?" Nigel could understand enough of Brian's words and the tone to know the negative connotations. "But, damn. Adam. The way he looks at you, he clearly dotes on you. You've got something there. It works."

Brian let out a warm chuckle and Adam's frown eased into a smile.

Nigel stepped closer and cleared his throat.

Seeing him, Adam's smile brightened all the more as Nigel handed him the fresh drink. Adam was practically beaming when Nigel then casually slipped an arm around Adam's waist as he sipped at his beer.

Nigel swallowed and then turned to Brian, “so, what do you do?” He asked, hoping he’d done it right. Realising he wanted to make a good impression on these people who spent so much time with Adam.

Brian smiled and began to explain his role at the Observatory, though Nigel barely understood every other word, he smiled all the same, Adam tucked against his side.

*

When they returned home from the party, Adam felt giddy and light.

It was a nice feeling. As was the feeling of having been in Nigel’s half embrace for most of the night.

It was wonderful. It was a dream.

But perhaps one that could be a reality.

They both grabbed bottles of water from the fridge and then went upstairs, Nigel walking Adam to his bedroom door like a date walking him home.

It made butterflies swirl in his stomach and there was no denying that he was feeling a clear attraction to Nigel. Emotionally, romantically, sexually. If he had been in doubt before there was no denying it now. Not after the party.

“Goodnight, gorgeous,” Nigel muttered, leaning in to kiss Adam’s cheek.

Nigel had never done that before but there was something so natural in it. It was only as he pulled back that they both still, looking at each other.

Then Nigel leaned in again and their mouths met in a soft press. His hand came up and cupped the side of Adam’s face, gently deepening the kiss until Adam let out a whimper.

That seemed to break the spell and Nigel pulled back, his eyes closed for a moment before he took in a breath and opened them.

“Goodnight,” he said again, giving Adam a gentle smile and the space Nigel likely understood he needed.

Part of him had wanted more, had wanted to invite Nigel into his bed. But a larger part was still processing all this and what it meant.

„Sleep well,” Adam replied, earning him a grin and a chuckle before Nigel’s door closed.

Adam closed his own then and started towards his bed.

He was hard, horny and in need of Nigel. Very specifically Nigel.

Adam stripped to his underwear and slid under the covers, feeling the need to pleasure himself. Not just for the release, but for the pleasure. Pleasure at the thought of Nigel.

As he reached into his underwear the alert on his phone sounded and his heart skipped a beat. Could it be Nigel messaging him to ask to come to his room?

Adam scrambled back out of the bed and pulled the phone out of his trouser pocket.

It was an email. With a frown Adam flicked it open, realising immediately why the address was familiar.

It was from the matching service. They could come and collect Nigel any time, Adam just needed to let them know a good date to do so.

Adam’s heart sank.

Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

Adam avoids dealing with Nigel leaving.

Adam trembled as Nigel's fingers grazed lightly over his skin. He'd never been touched like this by a man before. And it was so different to how it had been with Beth.

She had either wanted him to take the lead, or if she did so, she was aggressive. Not that he didn't enjoy being pinned down and ridden, it was just so different from this.

This was so tender.

A whimper shuddered from him as Nigel's fingers glanced over a nipple and continued down his very lightly furred belly and to his cock. The movements were painfully slow and delicate and Adam felt everything throb.

He had wanted this for so long. To try this. He'd used his dildo enough times to now have a great sense of anticipation, his ass clenching, as he thought about Nigel being inside him.

And, he realised as he moaned and sucked in his bottom lip, it wasn't just about finally trying this. It was about Nigel.

He wanted Nigel.

Nigel who seemed to be exuded a desperate lust that consumed them both as he leaned in and-

Adam woke with a start, suddenly very awake and very hard. He let out a groan as he moved and the bed covers rubbed against him. For a moment he thought he might come right then. And he wished he had. He hadn't come in his sleep since he was a teenager, but this had been so intense he was surprised he hadn't. And now he was so uncomfortable and needed the release, as much as he wanted to ignore it he was going to need to relieve himself.

He pulled back the covers with a shuddering breath and it only took a moment of stroking himself to start imagining it was Nigel's hands on him.

The thought made him feel guilty. He shouldn't be thinking of Nigel like this. They had to live together, the last thing he wanted was to make Nigel uncomfortable.

His concern only lasted as long as he did. Adam spilled over his hand a few moments later as he imagined Nigel's mouth wrapped around him.

Adam sank into his pillows, letting the pleasure wash over him for just a moment before reality chased it. The email came back to him and he remembered that they really wouldn't be living together much longer after all.

*

Nigel woke up feeling amazing. He stretched and yawned, remembering the night before with a smile and thinking the only thing missing was Adam next to him in the bed.

And, fuck, he wasn't even thinking of anything sexual. As much as he wanted to fuck around with his would-be husband, he just wanted to be near him. What he wouldn't give to be cuddled up with him. To have Adam in his arms, muttering sweet words in Romanian against his gorgeous skin.

The pleasant thoughts kept Nigel in bed a little longer, just imagining what it would be like to snuggle there together before starting the day.

In the end, it was the smell of bacon cooking that got Nigel out of bed, a smile creeping onto his face as he realised that Adam was making him breakfast for the first time.

It made both his heart and his cock swell, which resulted in adjusting himself a little in the pyjama pants he threw on before heading downstairs.

And yes, there was Adam, plating up breakfast for Nigel - eggs and bacon - whilst his own cereal bowl sat ready and waiting as always.

"You didn't need to," Nigel said, hoping he got all the words right.

Adam looked up and smiled, but strangely, the smile seemed sad and didn't reach his eyes.

"You're always making me breakfast." Adam replied and whilst Nigel didn't fully understand every word, he understood enough to know what Adam was saying.

"I like to," Nigel replied, resisting the urge to walk up behind Adam and slide his arms around him.

Adam smiled again and nodded, but still there was something missing there. In fact, Adam looked like he was upset.

"What's wrong?" Nigel asked as he took a seat where his plate had been placed.

Adam dropped into the chair opposite as usual and poured the milk over his cereal, poking at it with his spoon for a moment before letting out a sigh.

"I'm not feeling good."

"Sick?" Nigel asked, not sure he understood correctly.

Adam shook his head though and began to eat, looking down at his bowl the whole time.

Not that the whole time was long at all. In the end he barely ate half of it before excusing himself and dumping his bowl in the sick.

There was definitely something very wrong.

*

Adam wished he was better at concealing his emotions as he knew so many people were. This would be a good time for it, he realised. Only really able to hide what he was thinking and feeling

when he really consciously thought about it.

All he could really do was avoid Nigel as much as possible, and that was very difficult with them both in the house together. So Adam went out to the garden to do some weeding that had already been done and try to make himself look busy.

Even so, his mind was consumed.

Because it wasn't just Nigel he was avoiding, it was the email, the whole situation.

Nigel deserved to know and of course Adam had to tell him. He couldn't exactly arrange for them to collect Nigel and not let him know. They couldn't just turn up out of the blue and take him.

Adam squeezed his eyes shut, trying to block out the pain that came with those thoughts. Not of telling Nigel or it being sprung on him, but of Nigel leaving.

"Adam, you okay?"

Adam drew in a sharp breath and turned when he heard Nigel behind him on the back stoop.

He turned quickly back to the repotting he'd been doing, quite unnecessarily, and nodded.

"Adam," Nigel persisted.

There were a few light steps behind him and then Adam's breath halted as he felt Nigel's hand gently placed upon his lower back.

"Did I do a wrong thing?" Nigel asked.

Adam turned at the words, feeling bad that Nigel thought he must have done something wrong.

"No. Nothing is wrong."

Nigel raised a brow, which Adam knew meant disbelief.

"Adam," Nigel muttered his name softly and then cupped his face in his hands. "Tell me."

Adam held back a whimper at the touch. Barely any space between them as they gazed into each other's eyes. They stayed like that for a few long moments.

They both leaned in at the same time, Adam was sure. Their lips meeting in a gentle press before Nigel pulled back and his hands dropped away.

"Sorry, I shouldn't. That was-" Nigel started to back away.

"Please," Adam cried the word a lot more loudly and desperately than he had intended. But he *was* desperate, he didn't want Nigel to pull away.

Nigel looked at him then, and Adam wondered what he was thinking, what he was trying to decide?

"Want you to be okay," Nigel said finally.

"I'm okay," Adam replied with a nod.

And then Nigel was on him, his hands cupping Adam's face once more as they kissed again. This time deep and slow, tongues exploring each other's mouths as their bodies pressed ever closer together.

"Nigel," Adam gasped as he drew back for breath. "I want… Can we…"

Nigel smiled.

*

Nigel hadn't expected the day to go this way. In fact, he'd spent much of it really worrying about Adam. Something was clearly upsetting him and the way Adam was usually so blunt made Nigel wonder if it was something he'd done to upset Adam.

He racked his brain for details of the night before, the party and everyone he spoke to. Adam had seemed fine, more than fine. He had seemed pleased with how well it had gone and the effort Nigel had put in.

And Nigel had felt proud and happy to do that, to be what Adam needed.

Perhaps in the cold light of day things were different?

Or perhaps it was the kiss. Just a light peck on the cheek when he had wanted so much more. Had it been too much? Not enough?

Nigel felt his chest echo with pain at the thought of upsetting Adam.

But now Adam was in his arms, or at least he had been. Adam had started to pull him back into the house and, initially, towards the stairs. But then instead they had collapsed onto the sofa and sunk into another long, exploratory kiss as they felt each other's desire pressing between them.

"Adam, Adam," Nigel muttered, having forgotten every word he had learned in English as Adam pushed him onto his back and straddled him, grinding their crotches together through the clothing.

"Nigel, please…" Adam pleaded as he tried first to pull and then to push Nigel's top over his head and off.

"Tell me," Nigel prompted, needing to know what Adam wanted and how far he wanted this to go. Because right now, Nigel would do fucking anything as long as it meant their naked bodies would be pressed together and they would both get to come.

Adam's brow furrowed and his reply caught Nigel a little off guard, it wasn't a word that Nigel had expected Adam to have learned via duolingo so he must have googled it.

„Sex," Adam said in Romanian, his fingers sliding into Nigel's chest hair.

Nigel groaned.

"Sure?"

Adam nodded enthusiastically and Nigel knew there was only one thing for it.

He pushed Adam back as he got to his feet, dragging Adam up with him and then lifting him over his shoulder in a firefighter's carry before heading up the stairs.

*

When he was dropped on his back on his bed, Adam's breath hitched.

He wanted this, he really did, and all other considerations seemed to have vanished. He was so consumed by the idea of trying this, after the pornos and the dildo, that to really have sex with a man was something he was never sure would happen.

But it was more than that, of course it had to be. He was aroused by the idea of sex with Nigel specifically. Aroused by Nigel, specifically. He couldn't ignore what that meant.

He knew himself and his sexuality well enough to know that the attraction came from a place of deeper feeling.

"Nigel," Adam gasped as Nigel crawled over him, a moment before their mouths met again and Nigel kissed him soundly whilst their bodies pressed together.

He had been gently pinned like this in the past by Beth, when she had wanted to take the lead. But this was something so entirely different. Being with a man was so different.

Not better or worse, but so good and overwhelming for the differences.

Adam instinctively spread his legs, letting Nigel settle between them so that their pyjama clad bodies could better move together, their hard cocks rutting alongside and against each other. Adam knew he would easily come just from that, in fact he was already close.

Perhaps Nigel was too because he pulled back, looking down at Adam and panting.

"What, um…" Nigel struggled to find the words so continued in Romanian. „What would you like?"

Adam let out a shuddering breath, understanding enough to know Nigel's question, he just wasn't entirely sure of the answer.

He wanted more of this, more intimacy. And he did want to know what it was like to be penetrated by a man, and maybe what it was to penetrate a man too. But right now, he wasn't sure what he wanted and what Nigel would offer.

"I um, I don't…"

"Slow." Nigel replied, stroking his face gently.

When Adam nodded, Nigel smiled and moved off of him and then off the bed altogether. Adam couldn't help the little noise in his throat at the loss, worried that Nigel was going to back off altogether.

Which, perhaps he should?

Before Adam had chance to consider any further whether or not this was really a good idea, Nigel went to his closet and opened the door.

Adam took in a sharp breath as Nigel went to the box they both knew Nigel had discovered previously. He took it out and placed it on the bedside table before lifting off the lid and removing from it a small bottle of lube and Adam's slim dildo.

"This?" Nigel asked as he held it up.

Adam swallowed and nodded and what felt the perfect solution. He would love to feel Nigel inside him, but he wasn't sure he was entirely ready. This was an ideal alternative.

Nigel licked his lips as he moved back to the bed and with his free hand, tugged on Adam's pyjama pants. His smile was almost a grin but softer, supportive.

Adam swallowed again, his heart pounding as he did as requested, pulling down and kicking off his pants and then pulling his top over his head so that he was completely naked on the bed.

He felt a shiver of anticipation as Nigel's gaze roamed over him, stopping on his hard cock.

"Beautiful," Nigel said, breathless.

Adam blushed and reached for Nigel, tugging at his shirt then, not wanting to be the only one naked.

Nigel dropped the lube and dildo onto the bed before quickly moving next to Adam and leaning in to kiss him again.

Adam was panting, nervous anticipation running through him as he heard the lube bottle click.

There were fingers against him then, circling his rim in a much gentler and pleasurable way than he had ever managed with himself. He whined and moaned into the kiss as a finger pressed inside him.

Adam couldn't help the whimper as Nigel removed his finger after a few moments and then there was the sound of lube tube again and the familiar press of the dildo against him.

Adam sucked in a breath as he was breached, Nigel kissing him hungrily as he began to fuck him with the toy.

As it grazed his prostate, Adam's eyes rolled and he went pliant. Nigel continued to kiss his slack mouth as he rut against his thigh and thrust the toy in and out.

It was bliss. It was more than Adam could have ever dreamed.

As he tumbled closer and closer to climax he had to fight back tears at the thought that Nigel would be gone soon.

Chapter 6

Chapter Summary

An unexpected catalyst results in Nigel and Adam unpacking their feelings for each other.

Nigel woke for the second day in a row with Adam in his arms.

Adam, who had pulled him to his bedroom at night and said he was thankful it was the weekend so he didn't have to leave the bed. Adam who, despite all of this, seemed sad in those moments in between. When they weren't touching or kissing or sleeping there were moments of fleeting melancholy.

They had spent the time exploring each other and spending time together. Teaching each other how to say their various body parts in their native languages. Nigel wasn't sure there had ever been a time when he was happier, and he loved it. He wanted more of it.

He wanted this to be the start of an actual future together if Adam was willing to give it a try. Because, the truth was, Nigel had fallen hard. In some respects, this was all he had ever wanted and that had made him cautious. Concerned that he had been caught up in loving the idea of being in love rather than the idea of being with Adam.

But that couldn't be the case, he was sure. Not when his heart ached to be near the man, his chest swelled when Adam smiled. He loved hearing Adam talk even when he couldn't understand all of it. There was nothing about Adam that he hadn't fallen in love with.

It was all he could think about as he pulled Adam to him, spooning against him and nuzzling the back of his neck. He was absolutely and irrevocably-

"I'm in love with you," Adam blurted and they both stilled.

Nigel felt his heart hammer in his chest, terrified that if he moved or spoke he would break this perfect moment.

It was all he had wanted from life, and never expected. Even when he'd arrived here and been so sure that Adam would get rid of him the first chance he got or that they wouldn't even like each other. But instead he had let Nigel stay and they had grown close, become domestic. Adam had introduced him to his colleagues as his fiance and it hadn't felt like a lie, not for Nigel at least.

But he had wondered if that was why Adam seemed sad, if the lie in all this had been upsetting to him. The thought of it made Nigel's heart hurt, but he couldn't pretend he hated the lie. If that's what it was.

Finally, Adam was the first to move, turning in Nigel's arms to face him though he didn't meet his eyes, as was often the case.

"But I've lied to you."

Nigel frowned and ran a gentle hand down Adam's back.

"Lied?"

Maybe he had misunderstood the word or the sentence, because it sounded as though Adam was saying he had lied to him. Did he mean a different lie to the one they shared about their fake engagement? Nigel didn't understand.

"Not lied," Adam corrected, biting on his lower lip. "Omitted."

„I don't understand."

Adam sighed before he continued, "I didn't tell you. The service that arranged for you to come here, they can collect you now. You can go home, or wherever else it is they can take you. I've known for days and should have told you."

Nigel wasn't sure he caught every word, but he definitely got enough of it to understand.

"You're sending me away?"

Adam looked at him then, for just a moment before looking away with tears in his eyes.

"That was always the plan. I don't know what else to do. This was a mistake, you shouldn't be here."

"Here?" Nigel asked, "your bed?"

Adam nodded, "In my bed. My house. You were never meant to be here."

Nigel pulled away and for a moment it seemed like Adam would hold onto him, but he released him and let Nigel rise from the bed. He huffed and grabbed for his clothes to dress himself as Adam sat up in the bed looking confused.

"I'm not a thing. An object." Nigel growled. "If I didn't want to be here then I could have left at any time. Walked out the door. Not a prisoner or a-"

"You'd have been in breach of the contract you signed with the Service. You can only leave if they take you."

Nigel barked out a laugh. "Returned, like an object. A, um, robot. Android. Just good for keeping house and sex."

Adam sucked in a shocked breath at the words.

"No, you were never that. I liked having you here. I didn't want you to go."

"Now you do. Fine. When do they collect me? I will pack."

Nigel felt tears sting at his eyes and could see that Adam's were watery as well as the young man wrapped his arms around himself and Nigel had to stop himself from embracing him and making sure he was alright.

„I need some air," Nigel muttered as he walked out the door without a backward glance.

*

Nigel was pulsing with rage.

Not at Adam but at the situation and at himself. He should never have let himself get attached. When this mistake had happened he had planned simply to take advantage of the situation and live off of Adam as long as he could. But somewhere along the line it had all changed. And now he didn't want to leave.

And despite, he was sure, Adam saying that he loved him and didn't want him to go, he was sending him away anyway.

Between the rage and the language barrier, Nigel didn't have the words to ask what Adam meant. How he could want Nigel to leave if he loved him? It didn't make any sense and Nigel cursed the language barrier. There had to be more to it that he just hadn't understood, but he was too raw to talk about it. He needed to cool off.

If only he'd been better at learning English he might understand what was happening and why, Nigel cursed under his breath.

He stalked along the sidewalk, ignoring the cars passing by and the dog yapping in the yard he just passed. He had no idea where he was going, until he looked up and saw the park up ahead. He walked there often on his way to get groceries, or sometimes both he and Adam would take a stroll on Adam's days off and Nigel wondered if they might one day get a dog.

Even thinking about the life that he had fooled himself into believing he might have, was painful. That pain was all consuming as Nigel stepped off the sidewalk to cross the street to the park.

He didn't hear or see the car until it was right on top of him, and there was no avoiding being hit. He held up his arms to protect himself, but that didn't lessen the blow.

*

Adam looked at the clock again.

Nigel had been gone for three hours.

He shouldn't have told Nigel he loved him, he knew that as soon as he had said it and Nigel hadn't returned the words. Adam thought he would, he was so sure after so many years of trying to really understand when someone truly meant something and it wasn't his mind blindness. He was sure that Nigel loved him too.

But he hadn't said it and so Adam had tried to explain that he could leave, they were already planning to collect him. Something he should never have hid from Nigel. For all Adam knew, Nigel was counting down the days to being collected.

After all, Nigel hadn't asked to stay. The last of Adam's hopes had been dashed, so he had tried to pretend that it was all a misunderstanding. That they shouldn't have slept together.

He couldn't understand why Nigel was angry. He didn't love Adam, he didn't want to stay, and yet when Adam explained about being collected, Nigel had been so upset. It must have been because Adam hadn't told him as soon as he knew, which was fair.

And now he had been gone so long and Adam didn't know what to do.

He paced and found himself stimming much more than he had in a long while, upset by his lack of control over the situation and his part in it.

He needed Nigel to come home. He needed Nigel to stay, but it seemed that wasn't likely to happen. He would go and leave Adam alone just like his dad had.

Adam felt the tears rolling down his cheeks, his mind so noisy and busy with these thoughts.

It took him a moment to realise that his phone was ringing.

When he saw Nigel's number he picked up immediately.

"Nigel wh--"

"Mr Raki? Adam Raki?" A woman's voice asked from the other end of the line.

"Where's Nigel?" Adam asked, his mind reeling as to why anyone else would have his phone.

"Mr Raki, I'm afraid your partner has been involved in an accident."

Adam went numb as she gave him the details of the hospital, his phone still held tight in his shaking hand long after the call ended.

*

Adam didn't like hospitals. He had spent some time in hospitals and other medical places as a child, getting poked and prodded as they decided what made him who he was and what name it should be called. It had often been upsetting and uncomfortable, and he had tried to avoid hospitals as much as he could since.

But there was no avoiding this and that was fine. He needed to see Nigel and make sure he was okay, even if that meant putting up with the clinical setting and the nauseating scent of disinfectant.

"I'm looking for Nigel Ibanescu," Adam told the receptionist as soon as he got the desk for the emergency room.

She held up her finger to him and continued to talk on the phone. Adam tapped his fingers against his thigh as he waited. He wished his dad was with him, or Harlan, someone to help him navigate this, already fearing people would misunderstand him and the situation would spiral out of control. It was something he was used to, and despite it being frustrating and often upsetting, he had to just deal with neurotypicals not getting him. But in this case the stakes were so much higher.

As the woman continued to talk on the phone, Adam took a breath trying to think of what his dad or Harlan might tell him to do. Breath, calm down, speak clearly and politely.

When the receptionist hung up the phone she looked at him and he realised she was waiting for him to speak.

"Hello, I'm looking for Nigel Ibanescu, someone called and told me he is here."

“Are you family?” She asked as she looked at the computer screen, her eyes scanning over it and Adam realised she must be looking for Nigel for him.

“I’m, um,” he hesitated realising that their lie had to continue for now whether they liked it or not. The lie that had never really felt like a lie. “He’s my fiance, he doesn’t have anyone else. He’s not from here. Is he okay?”

The woman looked up at him and her expression softened, “take a seat and I’ll have someone come talk to you.”

“No, no…” Adam muttered, now fearing the worst. “I need to see him now. I need to see if he's okay.”

“Just take a seat,” she reiterated and Adam shook his head emphatically and rocked a little, trying to remain calm as he knew he should but sometimes he had no control over these things. He couldn’t help these reactions or their escalations.

“Mr Raki?” A soft voice came from behind him and he turned to see an older woman in a nurse’s uniform standing next to him with a smile.

“Yes, can you help me?”

She gave a nod to the receptionist and then went to lay her hand on Adam’s arm. When he flinched she dropped her hand and spoke gently.

“Nigel is okay, he asked me to come and find you. He said you might be, um, unsettled.”

“I have autism,” Adam said, trying to offer some explanation, and the nurse nodded.

“I see, well, come along with me.”

“Is Nigel okay?” Adam asked as he fell into step with the nurse as she led him towards the curtained booths.

“He’ll be okay, some broken bones. He was lucky the car was going so slow.” She pulled back a curtain to reveal an empty bed, making Adam draw a sharp breath. “If you wait here, the orderlies will bring him back shortly, he’s just gone down to orthopaedics. His arm needed to be put in a cast.”

Adam nodded, in a daze as she directed him to a plastic chair and he sat down.

He tapped his fingers against his leg without completely realising it, losing track of time as he worried about Nigel. Hit by a car. Because they had fought and Nigel had left. And he had been hit by a car.

Adam startled when the curtain pulled back and a wheelchair with Nigel was wheeled in.

“Adam!”

Relief flooded him and he threw himself into Nigel’s arms, sitting in his lap before he could even register any reason not to. Nigel cried out in pain and the orderly tried to ease Adam off of him, but Nigel held him as tightly as he could.

Finally Adam pulled back and looked Nigel over. He was wearing a medical gown, his whole right arm was in plaster and he had a splint on his other wrist. His face was scratched and he had a graze across his forehead.

“Nigel,” Adam whimpered his name as he stroked over Nigel’s face.

The nurse let herself through the curtain with a clipboard in hand.

“We’ll be discharging you shortly Mr Ibanescu, but you’ll need to return in a few days to have the temporary cast replaced with a permanent one once the swelling goes down. I will make you the appointment before you leave.”

“Thanks,” Nigel replied without looking up from Adam, as she wrote on the clipboard and checked it against his chart. Adam was equally unable to tear himself away.

Adam didn’t initially realise the nurse had gone again but when he did he turned back to Nigel.

“I don’t want you to leave,” Adam blurted. “But I understand if you want to go. You aren’t my toy, you are free, I’m sorry I made you feel that way.”

“You didn’t, gorgeous,” Nigel protested, snaking the hand of his unplastered arm up around the back of Adam’s neck. “I thought you wanted me to leave.”

Adam shook his head vigorously, “I don’t, but if you don’t love me that’s--”

Nigel interrupted him with a kiss, deep and passionate and taking a moment for them to pull back from.

“I fucking love you, I love you so much.” Nigel gasped the words when they broke apart.

“You didn’t say,” Adam said, thinking about what felt like days earlier but had only been that morning.

“I…” Nigel hesitated before replying, “I didn’t. I should have. I thought you knew, I thought it was obvious how much I care about you.”

Adam frowned and shook his head, “it’s difficult, because of the autism, I don’t always know wha--”

“The what?” Nigel asked. Adam was sure it wasn’t an angry tone but he did seem very confused.

“I have this thing, it’s called autism and it can make communicating difficult sometimes…” Adam started though Nigel’s frown didn’t ease.

“I don’t know what the word means,” Nigel explained.

There was a clearing of a throat then and they both looked over to see the nurse had reappeared with discharge papers and an appointment card.

“You can get dressed now Mr Ibanescu, do you need any help?”

Nigel took a moment to turn to her and then shook his head. “Will you help me?” He asked Adam.

“Of course.” Adam replied, standing up and helping Nigel out of the wheelchair. It only just dawning on him that he actually hadn’t ever told Nigel about having autism.

*

When they returned to Adam’s house, Nigel felt like an idiot.

Adam was quirky and could be fastidious about some things, but it never occurred to him there might be a reason behind that. Everyone was unique and had their foibles, didn’t mean that there was a condition involved. Though he thought back to the times when Adam had been clearly uncomfortable, like the first day he had made breakfast. Had he been upsetting Adam this whole time and not realised?

But as sheepish as Nigel felt about it, Adam clearly felt the same. In fact he blushed as he handed Nigel the laptop and showed him which add-on to use to translate the pages into Romanian so that he could read up all about it.

Adam had tried to explain in the taxi ride home, but between the pain meds and the big words, Nigel was a little lost.

The specific pages Adam had pointed him to helped, even if some of the translation into Romanian was a little clunky. He understood enough now and felt awful as he replayed the morning back over in his mind.

To be fair, Adam hadn’t given him much chance to respond, but if he had realised how important it was to actually say those words and state his love instead of expecting Adam to know, he would have done it.

Nigel didn’t realise he’d fallen asleep reading the laptop until Adam gently woke him.

“I’ve run you a bath, just don’t put your arms in it. I, um, I’ll help you.” Adam’s cheeks flushed as he spoke and Nigel vividly remembered the last time he had been naked in front of Adam. It seemed a lifetime ago and so strange to realise that it was actually only hours.

“Thank you,” Nigel rumbled. “Adam.” He called out as Adam started to walk away.

“Yes?” Adam turned and looked back at him, his cheeks no longer burning quite so much.

“I meant what I said at the hospital, I love you, Adam. I’m in love with you and I don’t want to leave.” Nigel reiterated what he had said in those whirlwind minutes of their reunion. “But I will leave if you want me too.”

“I want you to stay,” Adam quickly replied. “I want this to be real.”

“It already feels real to me, darling.” Nigel said, his heart swelling. “So fucking real.”

“Me too,” Adam smiled as his cheeks started to redden again. “Me too.”

Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

Milestones, a special delivery and a happy ending.

The weeks after Nigel's accident had passed in a blur of intimacy and joy, stretching into months.

Adam had worked from home as much as he could in order to help Nigel with his two injured arms whilst he was still healing. And Nigel had spent a lot of time applying for jobs, finally landing an interview a day after his cast was to be removed.

They were quickly moving into a new domestic balance with Nigel working security at the local mall and Adam at his job as usual, everything felt settled. Even more so since Adam had received confirmation from the Service that they had received his email saying no pick up was necessary and that Nigel would in fact remain with him.

Adam mentioned it often, obsessing over it a little, which Nigel understood a lot better now. And besides, he was happy to hear Adam confirm over and over that "no one is going to take you away."

Nigel stretched in their bed, his first Saturday off from his job for a while now that he worked weekends on rotation, and he was happy to spend it wrapped around Adam as they watched crap on television. Adam nestled in closer to him and hummed his contentment.

It had become a routine, watching trashy but addictive shows like Say Yes to the Dress or Judge Judy until they became too hungry to stay in bed. It was more than Nigel had ever dreamed possible for himself. In fact, it was better than anything he'd ever dared imagine.

"When did you realise you loved me?" Adam asked, prompted by a conversation currently taking place on the wedding dress show.

"I don't know. It was just little things. It all built up until I realised," Nigel replied through his smile, stroking his hand up and down Adam's back.

Adam nodded against his chest.

"And you?" Nigel asked.

"I realised when I wanted to have sex with you." Adam replied.

That made Nigel chuckle and nod himself. Of course that made sense. Being demi-sexual was one of the things Adam *had* mentioned early on.

When they had talked in more detail about autism they had decided they needed to sit down and share as much as possible on anything else they might not be aware of about the other. It was necessary to make this work.

Nigel had been hesitant to share the violence of his background, things that he now regretted and would forever feel shame for. But it had ended up being a release, lightening the load as he shared his past mistakes and had Adam to sooth and encourage him and remind him that he could be the very best of himself if he chose to be. And he really did fucking choose that, eager to never do anything that might part him from Adam.

Adam, in turn, had explained about his parents and especially his dad who had raised him alone. He had explained how hard it had been when he died, the support of his friend Harlan and how he had ended up in a relationship with a woman called Beth.

Nigel wanted to hate her, his jealous streak a mile wide, but more so because it seemed from some of the things that Adam said, that she often treated him like a fucking child. But he also had to be a little thankful to her. Without Beth, as Adam told it, he would have never started down the path that eventually led to the job at the Observatory.

Chances are they would never have met. Maybe Adam would have never started to question his sexuality, and would never have accidentally ordered himself a mail order groom and allowed him to stay.

“I want to have sex,” Adam told Nigel, “do you want to have sex?”

Nigel hummed and nodded, “I really do, gorgeous.”

Nigel started to move, intending to reposition them so that he could suck Adam’s cock and, as often was the case, end up in a 69 position.

With his arm in plaster and the other wrist in a splint, it had restricted the ways in which they could be intimate and so it had become the norm for them. Adam had found an enthusiasm for giving hand jobs and blowjobs that Nigel had encouraged. Though after a while it had felt a little one sided and so he had manoeuvred them into a position where he could reciprocate.

“No,” Adam protested softly. “I want you to penetrate me,” he met Nigel’s eyes and held the gaze for a moment before he began to fiddle with Nigel’s pyjama bottoms.

“Are you sure?” Nigel asked, breathless as his heart thumped in his chest.

Adam had offered to ride him more than once, but Nigel hadn’t wanted to have sex whilst still in plaster and restricted in his movements. The bruised ribs weren’t exactly fun when it came to blowjobs and handjobs so that had been another reason to avoid more vigorous sex acts.

But now he had been out of plaster for several long weeks and he was pretty much back to fighting fit, he’d even had to have a physical when he started his new job. He had no reason not to take it that step further, and hadn’t had for a while.

“Wait,” Nigel grabbed Adam’s hands and stilled them, despite the fact that his cock was now almost fully hard. “I… I don’t know if I’m sure.”

Adam frowned and stilled.

“You don’t want to have sex with me?” Just confusion there, no hurt.

“I do, fuck, I do Adam. I just… It’s been great so far,” Nigel’s chest tightened as he said the words he would never have admitted in the past. But now after everything they had shared he felt okay to confess to Adam. “It’s been so great so far. It’s been amazing, perfect. And I never want it to fucking end. What if this changes something between us. What if you hate it or decide you’re not-”

Nigel stopped himself, he knew the words he had been about to say were ridiculous, but the self-doubt he had always kept hidden raged inside him. He didn’t know what he would do if Adam decided this wasn’t for him after all, that Nigel wasn’t for him.

“Why would I hate it? I’ve used toys before, I know what to expect. I don’t understand.”

Nigel grit his teeth and cursed himself. “Fuck, angel I just… I’m worried that you’ll hate it and realise you don’t want to be with me.”

At the words Adam quirked a brow, looking thoughtful as he mulled it over and then frowned.

“That’s ridiculous. That would never happen.” Adam dismissed but then looked thoughtful again and removed his hands. “But if you’re not comfortable, we can go as slow as you like. We don’t have to have sex right now. Or ever. We can just keep doing what we’ve been doing.”

Nigel heard the echo of similar words he’d said to Adam in the past and it was the reassurance he needed.

“I want, angel, I want it.” Nigel muttered as he pulled Adam to him and kissed him. Their mouths met in a tender press, instantly deepening into a languid exploration that was only broken when Adam pulled back to climb over Nigel.

Their hard cocks pressed against each other as Adam rocked his hips back and forth.

“You can hold onto my hips now,” Adam said, an observation more than a prompt, which made Nigel smile.

“I can,” he agreed and moved both hands, now free from their bindings, to rest gently on Adam’s hips as he moved.

“What do you want, gorgeous?” Nigel asked, his voice husky with want.

“Can we do it like this? There’s a video I like with two men doing it like this.”

Nigel groaned and bit his lower lip, this time using his gentle grasp to rock Adam against his cock.

“You want to ride me, gorgeous?”

“Yeah,” Adam answered breathlessly. “I just need-”

Adam climbed off of Nigel and took a bottle of lube from the drawer before quickly removing his t-shirt and pyjama pants, Nigel doing the same from his position on the bed until they were both naked. Adam lay back down next to him then, pressing himself to Nigel’s side as he hiked up a leg and pushed the lube into Nigel’s hand.

“Will you-” Adam started, cut off when Nigel kissed him once more, squeezing some lube onto his fingers before reaching around to Adam’s hole.

This was something they'd done before too, either with his fingers or Adam's dildo, they had kissed and writhed against each other as Nigel finger fucked Adam. But this time felt so different, a precursor rather than the main event.

Time ceased having all meaning as Nigel opened Adam up. They kissed each other desperately and rut against each other as Nigel's fingers fucked Adam loose.

"Nigel," Adam gasped as he pushed back to take Nigel's fingers deeply.

"Condom?" Nigel asked against Adam's lips.

Adam nodded, "Yeah… mess…"

Nigel nodded his understanding. He loved the thought of coming inside his gorgeous fiance but he equally understood that some things were out of Adam's comfort zone and would need working up to if ever. And that was something he could always live with.

"Okay, gorgeous," Nigel growled and slid his fingers out of Adam, having to almost wrestle against the younger man as he reached over and pulled the drawer open to grab a condom.

He rolled back onto his back and was opening the packet when Adam climbed back on top of him, taking his cock in hand and stroking him firmly.

Nigel groaned and clenched his jaw as Adam touched him.

"Nigel," Adam's tone was demanding as he held Nigel's cock ready for the condom.

No sooner had he rolled it down his cock than Adam was climbing over him.

"Adam, wait… Fuuuuuuck…" Nigel shuddered as Adam sank don't onto his cock with no hesitation, bottoming out.

When their bodies were flush Adam stopped, both of them panting together as they took in what had just happened.

"Are you alright?" Nigel asked, grasping for the words in English as he nearly lost the ability to speak.

Adam nodded, "y-yeah… feels good."

Adam started to rock slowly at first, grinding himself on Nigel's cock before lifting himself slightly and sliding back down with a moan.

He repeated the action over and over until he was going faster and lifting higher.

"Fuck… need to fuck you…" Nigel babbled the words as he met each thrust, pounding up into Adam, „need to fuck you."

Adam nodded as he continued to practically bounce on Nigel's lap.

With a grunt, Nigel took hold of Adam's hips and rolled them on the wide bed, barely sliding out of him before he was between his legs and pushing back inside.

“Nigel,” Adam moaned, snaking his hands up behind Nigel’s neck and dragging him down into a kiss as Nigel started to pound into him.

Nigel had thought about their first time often, how gentle he would be with Adam, how tender. Wanting to make the experience special and wonderful.

But, fuck, this was wonderful! And easily the best sex Nigel had ever had. Adam was so responsive and eager, his legs now up around Nigel’s waist as he tried to drag him deeper.

“Yes, yes,” Adam gasped between kisses, meeting each of Nigel’s thrusts and shaking in Nigel’s arms. “There, there…” Nigel kept the angle, realising he must be hitting his beautiful fiance just right.

„Gonna come,” Nigel warned between kisses, not even realising that he was no longer speaking English.

He didn’t realise until after it was all over. Until Adam cried out and came, his whole body tightening around Nigel and sending Nigel spiralling into his own climax, pumping come deep into his lover, filling the condom with the evidence of his pleasure.

Not until Adam collapsed on him, clinging to him as he softened inside him.

Not until Adam chuckled, breathless, a wet sensation against Nigel’s neck where Adam’s face was buried.

“It was so good you forgot how to speak English,” Adam panted out the words and chuckled again, his muscles tightening as he did and forcing Nigel to pull out until Adam flopped, exhausted, onto his back and they both laughed.

„So good,” Nigel confirmed, deliberately in Romanian.

Adam let out a beautiful tinkle of laughter before he sighed happily and sank further into the pillows as they both soaked in happiness and promise that filled the room.

A Year Since Delivery

Adam smiled, trying to contain his excitement as he waited for his delivery.

The alert had said it should arrive soon, and he was hoping it would arrive before Nigel came down. He had already heard him get out of bed and turn on the shower.

Adam refreshed the app on his phone, one stop away.

He let himself out onto the porch, pacing up and down and waiting for the van to appear in his driveway.

Finally Adam spotted it and it was all he could do not to run to meet it, instead waiting patiently until it pulled up and then going to meet the driver as he opened the back of the van and began to rummage.

“Adam Raki?” The driver asked, when Adam nodded the driver handed him a clipboard to sign which he did quickly and then passed it back.

In return the driver placed a small package in Adam's hand, which he started to open before the van had even begun to pull away.

By the time he got back to the door he had opened the little box and smiled at the perfect contents. Exactly how he had hoped it would turn out.

When Adam let himself back into the house Nigel was heading down the stairs in his lounge wear, a towel around his shoulders catching the moisture from his hair.

"Who was that?" Nigel asked as he headed to the kitchen to start on breakfast. When Adam didn't immediately answer he looked up at him, "is everything okay?"

"Yes," Adam replied and nodded, trying not to grin so broadly but finding it hard to hide.

"What are you up to?" Nigel smirked, cocking his head at Adam.

Adam closed the distance between them and held the ring box between them.

"I thought we should, um, make it official."

Nigel frowned and looked at the box, drawing in a quick breath as Adam opened it.

"Adam."

The way Nigel said his name made Adam melt.

"Will you marry me?" Adam asked as Nigel took the ring from the box, a thick tungsten band that Nigel quickly realised had an inscription inside it.

He read it aloud, "Special Delivery."

Nigel let out a bark of laughter, tears in his eyes as he slipped the ring onto his finger then pulled Adam to him.

"I'll marry you. Anywhere you want, any time. You just name it and I'm there."

Adam sank into Nigel's arms and hummed his contentment. This wasn't what he'd expected when he'd ordered a spouse online, but it truly was special. Having Nigel in his life was the most special thing that had ever happened to him.

"You're the best wrong delivery I've ever had," Adam joked, causing them both to laugh, their bodies shaking together.

„I love you," Adam told Nigel in his perfectly pronounced, often rehearsed Romanian.

Nigel let out a sigh that Adam felt through his entire body.

"I love you too, gorgeous. I love you too."

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